

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the instant application:

What is claimed is:

1. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method of negotiating an electronic commerce (e-commerce) transaction for the sale of a selected good comprising the steps of:

identifying an asking price for the selected good;

retrieving from memory merchant business objectives (MBOs); ~~and consumer privacy rules (CPRs), said MBOs comprising a series of merchant-specified rules specifying a plurality of cash or cash-equivalent incentives to offer to a consumer in exchange for consumer-specific information, and said CPRs comprising a series of consumer-specified rules specifying a minimum cash or cash-equivalent incentive for which a consumer will exchange specific items of consumer-specific information;~~

~~comparing said MBOs to said CPRs and negotiating an agreement for the sale of the selected good and exchange of the consumer-specific information with an incentive acceptable to a merchant and a consumer without requiring interaction with either the merchant or the consumer or between the merchant and the consumer, wherein said negotiation is performed by a negotiation engine configured to consider said MBOs, said CPRs, and at least one other rule, wherein the comparing is performed by said negotiation engine configured to determine whether at least one agreement can be reached based on the comparison of said rules in said MBOs and said rules in said CPRs and without requiring interaction with either the merchant or the consumer or between the merchant and the consumer;~~

~~responsive to negotiating an agreement, consummating said e-commerce transaction by completing the sale of the selected good with said negotiated incentive and by exchanging said consumer information~~

based upon the MBOs, determining a corresponding merchant valuation for each of a plurality of classes of merchant-requested information;

retrieving consumer privacy rules (CPRs) from a different memory;

based upon the CPRs, determining a consumer-specific minimal valuation for each of a plurality of classes of consumer-specific information;

if at least one class of merchant-requested information matches at least one class of consumer-specific information, determining whether an agreement can be reached for a sale of the selected good with an incentive for providing consumer-specific information from the at least one class of consumer-specific information, wherein the incentive is determined based upon a comparison of a merchant valuation corresponding to the at least one merchant-requested information class and a minimal valuation corresponding to the at least one consumer-specific information class;

consummating the e-commerce transaction for the sale of the selected good with said incentive if it is determined that an agreement can be reached.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, said consummating step further comprising:
providing agreed upon e-commerce transaction information to an e-commerce processing system for processing said e-commerce transaction.

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, ~~said comparing and negotiating step~~ further comprising:

receiving a counter-offer, said counter-offer specifying an adjusted incentive.

4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, ~~said comparing and negotiating step~~ further comprising:

receiving a counter-offer, said counter-offer specifying an adjusted asking price corresponding to said proposed exchange of consumer information.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, ~~said comparing and negotiating~~ further comprising:

adjusting said incentive consistent with said MBOs.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, ~~said comparing and negotiating step~~ further comprising:

adjusting said asking price consistent with said CPRs.

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said ~~negotiated~~ incentive is selected from the group consisting of a discount, an additional good, cash, and a cash equivalent.

8. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein said consumer privacy rules further specify an acceptable incentive type for the exchange of selected consumer information.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, ~~wherein said other rule is operable to bias said negotiation engine in favor of the merchant by minimizing a value of said negotiated incentives in said agreement~~ further comprising adjusting a valuation of the incentive in favor of the merchant.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, ~~wherein said other rule is operable to bias said negotiation engine in favor of the consumer by maximizing a value of said~~

~~negotiated incentives in said agreement~~ further comprising adjusting a valuation of the incentive in favor of the consumer.

11. (Currently Amended) A method of negotiating an electronic commerce (e-commerce) transaction for the sale of a selected good comprising the steps of:

identifying an asking price for the selected good;

retrieving from memory merchant business objectives (MBOs), said MBOs comprising a series of merchant-specified rules specifying a plurality of cash or cash-equivalent incentives offered to a consumer in exchange for consumer-specific information;

~~receiving consumer privacy rules (CPRs), said CPRs comprising a series of consumer-specified rules specifying a minimum cash or cash-equivalent incentive for which a consumer will exchange specific items of consumer-specific information;~~

~~comparing said MBOs to said CPRs and negotiating an agreement for the sale of the selected good and exchange of the consumer-specific information with an incentive acceptable to a merchant and a consumer without requiring interaction with either the merchant or the consumer or between the merchant and the consumer, wherein said negotiation is performed by a negotiation engine configured to consider said MBOs, said CPRs, and at least one other rule, wherein the comparing is performed by said negotiation engine configured to determine whether at least one agreement can be reached based on the comparison of said rules in said MBOs and said rules in said CPRs and without requiring interaction with either the merchant or the consumer or between the merchant and the consumer; and~~

~~responsive to negotiating an agreement, consummating said e-commerce transaction by completing the sale of the selected good with said negotiated incentive and by exchanging said consumer information~~

retrieving consumer privacy rules (CPRs) from a different memory;

based upon the CPRs, determining a consumer-specific minimal valuation of the consumer-specific information;

determining whether an agreement can be reached for a sale of the selected good with an incentive for providing the consumer-specific information, wherein the incentive is determined based upon the minimal valuation in comparison to at least one MBO;

consummating the e-commerce transaction for the sale of the selected good with said incentive if it is determined that an agreement can be reached.

12. (Original) The method of claim 11, said consummating step further comprising:
providing agreed upon e-commerce transaction information to an e-commerce processing system for processing said e-commerce transaction.

13. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 11, ~~said comparing and negotiating step~~ further comprising:
receiving a counter-offer, said counter-offer specifying an adjusted incentive.

14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 11, ~~said comparing and negotiating step~~ further comprising:
receiving a counter-offer, said counter-offer specifying an adjusted asking price corresponding to said proposed exchange of consumer information.

15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 11, ~~said comparing and negotiating step~~ further comprising:
adjusting said incentive consistent with said MBOs.

16. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 11, ~~said comparing and negotiating step~~ further comprising:
adjusting said asking price consistent with said CPRs.

17. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 11, wherein said ~~negotiated~~ incentive is selected from the group consisting of a discount, an additional good, cash, and a cash equivalent.

18. (Original) The method of claim 17, wherein said consumer privacy rules further specify an acceptable incentive type for the exchange of selected consumer information.

19. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 11, ~~wherein said other rule is operable to bias said negotiation engine in favor of the merchant by minimizing a value of said negotiated incentives in said agreement~~ further comprising adjusting a valuation of the incentive in favor of the merchant.

20. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 11, ~~wherein said other rule is operable to bias said negotiation engine in favor of the consumer by maximizing a value of said negotiated incentives in said agreement~~ further comprising adjusting a valuation of the incentive in favor of the consumer.

21. (Withdrawn) A method of configuring merchant business objectives comprising:
identifying an item of consumer information desired by a merchant;
specifying at least one incentive for said item of consumer information to be offered to a consumer in exchange for said item of consumer information; and
storing an indication of said item of consumer information and said corresponding incentive in a data store.

22. (Withdrawn) A method of configuring consumer privacy rules comprising:
identifying an item of consumer information which a consumer will provide to a merchant;

specifying at least one incentive for said item of consumer information in exchange for which said consumer will provide said item of consumer information to a merchant; and

storing said item of consumer information and said minimum incentive in a data store.

23. (Currently Amended) A privacy negotiation system for negotiating an electronic commerce transaction involving a transfer of selected consumer information items, said system comprising:

a merchant objectives data store comprising merchant-specified rules for offering incentives to a consumer during said electronic commerce transaction for a selected good, ~~wherein said rules specify a plurality of cash or cash-equivalent incentives to offer to a consumer in exchange for consumer-specific information, and wherein said incentives are conditioned upon said transfer of said selected consumer information items from said consumer to a merchant;~~

a negotiation engine communicatively linked to said merchant objectives data store and to a consumer privacy rules data store, wherein said negotiation engine is configured to

retrieve merchant business objectives (MBOs) from said merchant objectives data store,

based upon the MBOs, determine a corresponding merchant valuation for consumer-specific information,

retrieve consumer privacy rules (CPRs) from a different memory the consumer privacy rules data store,

based upon the CPRs, determine a consumer-specific minimal valuation for the consumer-specific information, and

determine whether an agreement can be reached for a sale of the selected good with an incentive for providing the consumer-specific information to the

merchant, wherein the incentive is determined based upon a comparison of the merchant valuation and the minimal valuation corresponding to the consumer-specific information class;

~~mediates between said merchant and said consumer based on the merchant-specified rules, the consumer-specified rules, and at least one other rule and negotiates an agreement for the electronic transaction for the selected good specifying a cash or cash-equivalent incentive for which a consumer will exchange specific items of consumer-specific information, wherein said engine determines prior to said negotiation whether at least one merchant-consumer agreement can be reached based on a comparison of the merchant-specified rules with consumer-specified rules, the determination being made without requiring interaction with either a merchant or a consumer or between the merchant and consumer; and~~

a merchant agent for negotiating said electronic commerce transaction on behalf of said merchant, said merchant agent communicating with said negotiation engine and said merchant privacy rules data store.

24. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 23, further comprising:

~~a consumer privacy rules data store comprising rules for disclosing said selected consumer information items; and~~

a consumer agent for negotiating said electronic commerce transaction on behalf of said consumer, said consumer agent communicating with said negotiation engine and said consumer privacy rules data store.

25. (Currently Amended) The system of claim ~~[[24]]~~ 23, wherein said consumer privacy rules data store further includes said selected consumer information items.

26. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 23, further comprising:

a transaction processing system for completing the sale of the selected good with said ~~negotiated~~ incentive and by exchanging said consumer information.

27. (Currently Amended) A machine readable storage, having stored thereon a computer program for negotiating an electronic commerce (e-commerce) transaction having a plurality of code sections executable by a machine for causing the machine to perform the steps of:

identifying an asking price for the selected good;

retrieving from memory merchant business objectives (MBOs); ~~and consumer privacy rules (CPRs), said MBOs comprising a series of merchant specified rules specifying a plurality of cash or cash equivalent incentives to offer to a consumer in exchange for consumer specific information, and said CPRs comprising a series of consumer specified rules specifying a minimum cash or cash equivalent incentive for which a consumer will exchange specific items of consumer specific information;~~

~~comparing said MBOs to said CPRs and negotiating an agreement for the sale of the selected good and exchange of the consumer specific information with an incentive acceptable to a merchant and a consumer without requiring interaction with either the merchant or the consumer or between the merchant and the consumer, wherein said negotiation is performed by a negotiation engine configured to consider said MBOs, said CPRs, and at least one other rule, wherein the comparing is performed by said negotiation engine configured to determine whether at least one agreement can be reached based on the comparison of said rules in said MBOs and said rules in said CPRs and without requiring interaction with either the merchant or the consumer or between the merchant and the consumer;~~

~~responsive to negotiating an agreement, consummating said e-commerce transaction by completing the sale of the selected good with said negotiated incentive and by exchanging said consumer information~~

based upon the MBOs, determining a corresponding merchant valuation for each of a plurality of classes of merchant-requested information;

retrieving consumer privacy rules (CPRs) from a different memory;

based upon the CPRs, determining a consumer-specific minimal valuation for each of a plurality of classes of consumer-specific information;

if at least one class of merchant-requested information matches at least one class of consumer-specific information, determining whether an agreement can be reached for a sale of the selected good with an incentive for providing consumer-specific information from the at least one class of consumer-specific information, wherein the incentive is determined based upon a comparison of a merchant valuation corresponding to the at least one merchant-requested information class and a minimal valuation corresponding to the at least one consumer-specific information class;

consummating the e-commerce transaction for the sale of the selected good with said incentive if it is determined that an agreement can be reached.

28. (Currently Amended) The machine readable storage of claim 27, ~~said consummating step~~ further comprising:

providing agreed upon e-commerce transaction information to an e-commerce processing system for processing said e-commerce transaction.

29. (Currently Amended) The machine readable storage of claim 27, ~~said comparing and negotiating step~~ further comprising:

receiving a counter-offer, said counter-offer specifying an adjusted incentive.

30. (Currently Amended) The machine readable storage of claim 27, ~~said comparing and negotiating step~~ further comprising:

receiving a counter-offer, said counter-offer specifying an adjusted asking price corresponding to said proposed exchange of consumer information.

31. (Currently Amended) The machine readable storage of claim 27, ~~said comparing and negotiating step~~ further comprising:

adjusting said incentive consistent with said MBOs.

32. (Currently Amended) The machine readable storage of claim 27, ~~said comparing and negotiating step~~ further comprising:

adjusting said asking price consistent with said CPRs.

33. (Currently Amended) The machine readable storage of claim 27, wherein said ~~negotiated~~ incentive is selected from the group consisting of a discount, an additional good, cash, and a cash equivalent.

34. (Currently Amended) The machine readable storage of claim 33, wherein said consumer privacy rules further specify an acceptable incentive type for the exchange of selected consumer information.

35. (Currently Amended) The machine readable storage of claim 27, ~~wherein said other rule is operable to bias said negotiation engine in favor of the merchant by minimizing a value of said negotiated incentives in said agreement~~ further comprising adjusting a valuation of the incentive in favor of the merchant.

36. (Currently Amended) The machine readable storage of claim 27, ~~wherein said other rule is operable to bias said negotiation engine in favor of the consumer by maximizing a value of said negotiated incentives in said agreement~~ further comprising adjusting a valuation of the incentive in favor of the consumer.

37. (Currently Amended) A machine readable storage, having stored thereon a computer program for negotiating an electronic commerce (e-commerce) transaction having a plurality of code sections executable by a machine for causing the machine to perform the steps of:

identifying an asking price for the selected good;

retrieving from memory merchant business objectives (MBOs), said MBOs comprising a series of merchant-specified rules specifying a plurality of cash or cash-equivalent incentives offered to a consumer in exchange for consumer-specific information;

~~receiving consumer privacy rules (CPRs), said CPRs comprising a series of consumer-specified rules specifying a minimum cash or cash-equivalent incentive for which a consumer will exchange specific items of consumer-specific information;~~

~~comparing said MBOs to said CPRs and negotiating an agreement for the sale of the selected good and exchange of the consumer-specific information with an incentive acceptable to a merchant and a consumer without requiring interaction with either the merchant or the consumer or between the merchant and the consumer, wherein said negotiation is performed by a negotiation engine configured to consider said MBOs, said CPRs, and at least one other rule, wherein the comparing is performed by said negotiation engine configured to determine whether at least one agreement can be reached based on the comparison of said rules in said MBOs and said rules in said CPRs and without requiring interaction with either the merchant or the consumer or between the merchant and the consumer; and~~

~~responsive to negotiating an agreement, consummating said e-commerce transaction by completing the sale of the selected good with said negotiated incentive and by exchanging said consumer information~~

retrieving consumer privacy rules (CPRs) from a different memory;

based upon the CPRs, determining a consumer-specific minimal valuation of the consumer-specific information;

determining whether an agreement can be reached for a sale of the selected good with an incentive for providing the consumer-specific information, wherein the incentive is determined based upon the minimal valuation in comparison to at least one MBO;

consummating the e-commerce transaction for the sale of the selected good with said incentive if it is determined that an agreement can be reached.

38. (Currently Amended) The machine readable storage of claim 37, ~~said consummating step~~ further comprising:

providing agreed upon e-commerce transaction information to an e-commerce processing system for processing said e-commerce transaction.

39. (Currently Amended) The machine readable storage of claim 37, ~~said comparing and negotiating step~~ further comprising:

receiving a counter-offer, said counter-offer specifying an adjusted incentive.

40. (Currently Amended) The machine readable storage of claim 37, ~~said comparing and negotiating step~~ further comprising:

receiving a counter-offer, said counter-offer specifying an adjusted asking price corresponding to said proposed exchange of consumer information.

41. (Currently Amended) The machine readable storage of claim 37, ~~said comparing and negotiating step~~ further comprising:

adjusting said incentive consistent with said MBOs.

42. (Currently Amended) The machine readable storage of claim 37, ~~said comparing and negotiating step~~ further comprising:

adjusting said asking price consistent with said CPRs.

43. (Currently Amended) The machine readable storage of claim 38, wherein said ~~negotiated~~ incentive is selected from the group consisting of a discount, an additional good, cash, and a cash equivalent.

44. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 43, wherein said consumer privacy rules further specify an acceptable incentive type for the exchange of selected consumer information.

45. (Currently Amended) The machine readable storage of claim 38, ~~wherein said other rule is operable to bias said negotiation engine in favor of the merchant by minimizing a value of said negotiated incentives in said agreement~~ further comprising adjusting a valuation of the incentive in favor of the merchant.

46. (Currently Amended) The machine readable storage of claim 38, ~~wherein said other rule is operable to bias said negotiation engine in favor of the consumer by maximizing a value of said negotiated incentives in said agreement~~ further comprising adjusting a valuation of the incentive in favor of the consumer.

47. (Withdrawn) A machine readable storage, having stored thereon a computer program having a plurality of code sections executable by a machine for causing the machine to perform the steps of:

- identifying an item of consumer information desired by a merchant;
- specifying at least one incentive for said item of consumer information to be offered to a consumer in exchange for said item of consumer information; and
- storing an indication of said item of consumer information and said corresponding incentive in a data store.

48. (Withdrawn) A machine readable storage, having stored thereon a computer

program having a plurality of code sections executable by a machine for causing the machine to perform the steps of:

identifying an item of consumer information which a consumer will provide to a merchant;

specifying at least one incentive for said item of consumer information in exchange for which said consumer will provide said item of consumer information to a merchant; and

storing said item of consumer information and said minimum incentive in a data store.